Toms Coffee House June the 26. 1745

A
COPY
OF A
LETTER

FROM A
Perſon of Diſtinction at the *HAGUE*,
TO THE
ABBE *DE LA VILLE*;
ON THE
Order againſt publiſhing News-Papers at *PARIS*:

IN WHICH IS CONTAINED
A Multitude of Particulars relating to the Battle of *FONTENOY*,
that have not hitherto been made PUBLICK.

LONDON:
Printed for M. COOPER, at the *Globe* in *Pater-Noſter-Row*. 1745.
[Price Six-Pence.]

A
COPY
OF A
LETTER, &c.

SIR,

I AM ſomewhat ſurpriſed, that your Excellency ſhould imagine that the Reaſons which induced the Parliament of *Paris* to interpoſe ſo vigorouſly with Regard to the News tranſmitted from thence into theſe Provinces, have eſcaped our Notice; or that you ſhould take it ill, I expreſſed myſelf laſt Night in the Manner I did upon that Subject. You were then pleaſed to wiſh, that I would give you my Thoughts at large upon this Head; becauſe you ſaid you were ſatisfied, that upon Recollection I would change them. You are miſtaken, Sir. I have recollected myſelf, and I am confirmed in what I then delivered as my Opinion, which was, that this Prohibition of writing News was grounded in too great Fear of your News-Writers ſending unwelcome Truths into the Provinces of your own Country, whereas I am perſuaded that the Things you are afraid they ſhould have publiſhed, are moſt of them of ſuch a Nature that they durſt not have publiſhed, even if this thundering Edict, big with Impriſonment and the Gallies, had never appeared.

This is the Point at your Excellency's own Requeſt, which I am to make good, and if in making it good, I tell you unwelcome [illegible] muſt [illegible] great [illegible] Maſter, [illegible] People entertain ſuch Notions as they profeſs they entertain themſelves; and therefore they bear with very little Patience, ſuch Freedoms as are incompatible with theſe Meaſures of Submiſſion. But to the Point: Give me leave to aſk you, whether you think any News-Writer in *France* durſt have publiſhed to the World, that the Royal Army, ſince the firſt of *May* laſt, has loſt 19,347 Men, excluſive of Deſerters, of which there are ſo many, that the *Auſtrians* are actually forming them into Independent Companies? Yet the Fact is true, as I can ſhew you by the Certificates on the Muſter-Rolls tranſmitted to *Liſle* and *Doway*.

Do you conceive, Sir, that any Man would have writ to us, or any of his Correſpondents in the Provinces of *France*, that all that has been publiſhed in your Gazettes of the King's Diſpoſition, of the King's Orders, the King's charging at the Head of his Houſhold-Troops, the King's expoſing himſelf in riding to the Regiment of the Crown through the warmeſt of the Fire, were all Forgeries and Fictions? And that his Majeſty never paſſed the *Schelde*, but was juſt as ſafe in his Poſt, as he could have been at *Verſailles*? Yet ſo it was, Sir: And his Majeſty was told by the great Marſhal *Saxe* himſelf, that he was reſponſible to the Nation for his Majeſty's Perſon, and that therefore he could not ſuffer him to expoſe himſelf, as the King might otherwiſe have done. His Majeſty's Courage is not in Queſtion, all we ſpeak of is where he was.

Do you really fancy, that there is a Man at *Paris* mad enough, I won't ſay to tell the World, but to whiſper his Wife, that notwithſtanding the kind, the tender, the charitable Orders that his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty was heard to give with Regard to the unhappy brave Men, that after being admir'd for their Valour and Intrepidity, that were by the Fortune of War left wounded on the Field of Battle, his Soldiers ſhould knock the Brains out of the *Engliſh* with the Butt-Ends of their Muſkets, with ſuch generous Expreſſions as theſe in their Mouths, *Ha! Dog! are not you dead yet?* The Fact is ſtrange and inhuman, altogether inconſiſtent with the Laws of Humanity, or the Rules of War, quite irreconcileable with the boaſted Valour, and to ſpeak the Truth, with the uſual Practice of the *French* Nation. But here lies the Miſchief after all, that notwithſtanding theſe Exaggerations, in ſpite of theſe Improbabilities, it is ſtill a Fact, a certain and indubitable Fact.

What

What *Gazette*, think you, would have reported, that a Trumpet from the Allied Army carried the King a Coffer, ſealed with the Arms of the Duke of *Cumberland*, the Generals Count de *Konigſegg*, Prince *Waldeck*, and Baron *Wendt*, filled with Pieces of thick Glaſs, Bottoms of Bottles, Old Iron, Broken Bits, Pieces of Steel, Braſs and Iron Buttons, all bloody, that were taken out of the Wound of Lieutenant General *Campbell*, and of other Officers and Soldiers? Who durſt have publiſhed this; or who do you think would have been hardy enough to have own'd, that all the *Dutch* wounded Soldiers that were carried to *Mons* died, with their Bodies ſo ſwollen, that they were ready to burſt?

What News-Writer would have ventur'd to do ſo much Juſtice to his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty as to have acknowledged, that upon the Sight of theſe diſmal Reliques, and the reading of a very modeſt Letter from the Duke of *Cumberland*, importing that the moſt cruel and barbarous Nations never made uſe of ſuch kind of Weapons in carrying on War, his Majeſty turn'd pale, and afterwards quitted the Room, to avoid expreſſing his Sentiments?

Who would have valued himſelf on deviſing the Anſwer that was given upon the Spot to theſe Complaints, by Men whoſe Heads are ſo fertile in Expedients, that as they dared any thing, ſo there is nothing they cannot excuſe when done? They ſaid, that the ſame thing had been practiſed by the Allies at the Battle of *Dettingen*. But who can believe this? Who can imagine, if there had been any ſuch thing practiſed, we ſhould not have heard of it before, or that the ſame Steps ſhould not have been taken by the *French* Generals in that Caſe, which was taken in this by the Officers of the Allies? But it is better to frame an Untruth, than to be without any Excuſe at all, than to be obliged to avow a Deſign to murder, and Reſolution to break thro' all the Rules of War, againſt an Enemy, that has ever adher'd to them with the moſt ſcrupulous Nicety; and will be even now very unwilling to make uſe of the juſt Law of Reprizals againſt ſuch as deſerve it in the higheſt Degree?

What News-Writer at *Paris* would have made the World acquainted with the very ſtrange Conduct that was purſued by the *French* Generals in regard to the wounded? They firſt of all ſent to the Allies to deſire they would carry them off; upon which the Duke of *Cumberland* wrote the genteeleſt Letter in the World, and ſent agreeable to their Demand 105 Waggons to bring off the wounded Men, inſtead of which both Waggons and Men were detain'd, contrary to the Law of Nations and of Arms, with regard to the Carriages at leaſt. Theſe things are new and extravagant, ſcarce heard of among *Savages* and *Bavarians*, but not to be expected, nay indeed ſcarce to be believed, when reported of the *French*, who pique themſelves ſo much on behaving with Honour in all Things, but more eſpecially in War, which you know, Sir, has its Laws as well as Peace: Laws invented, practiſed, and ſubmitted to, by the braveſt and moſt civilized Nations; and, which is ſtill more, the not practiſing of which has been conſtantly regarded as the moſt infamous Note of Barbarity. But to wave Reflections, and to proceed in my Catalogue of Facts.

In what Gazette do you think we ſhould ever have read, that *Engliſh* Officers made Priſoners of War, when wounded, were refuſed Neceſſaries for their Money, and the Aſſiſtance of Surgeons; ſo that Wounds in themſelves, neither dangerous, nor mortal, were ſuffered to become both by this Kind of Uſage, notwithſtanding the warmeſt Remonſtrances, and their procuring the Interpoſition of Officers of Diſtinction in their Favour; which Facts, however dark and glaring in their Nature, are yet capable of being proved in the manner the moſt authentick, by Letters under the Hands of theſe Gentlemen, ſetting forth their Caſes and their Apprehenſions, which were too fatally verified by the Events. War, Sir, in itſelf, is naturally ſo big with Horror, ſo productive of Deſtruction, ſo fruitful of Evils, that it has been always the Study of the Great and Good to deviſe a Variety of Means to leſſen, or, at leaſt to alleviate them. How comes it then to paſs, that in the preſent War, in which there are no Circumſtances that could lead a Man to ſuſpect more than ordinary Animoſities in the Combatants, ſuch different Methods ſhould be practiſed?

Which of your Gazettes would in plain Terms have told us, that one of your ableſt Miniſters has been charged to ſtrain his great Capacity to the utmoſt in order to induce a young Prince to Perjury himſelf, who has but juſt open'd his Eyes to the miſchievous Practice of ſelf-intereſted Miniſters, who under pretence of ſupporting Claims that have been over and over renounced, have brought his Country to the Brink of Ruin? And this by affirming the greateſt Falſhoods with the utmoſt Solemnity; ſuch as that the Army of the Allies had been totally ruin'd in the late Engagement; that your Loſs had been but 4000 killed and wounded, whereas they had loſt 14,000; from whence he inferr'd, that this was the Time for him to revive thoſe Pretenſions, which his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, now victorious and triumphant, was ready and willing to ſupport.

It would be extremely eaſy for me to draw together Abundance of Facts of this Nature, but that I would not exerciſe your Patience too much, which in all Probability I have put ſufficiently to

the

the ſtretch already. Give me leave, however, to conclude, that though it is highly unlikely any of your *Pères-a-la-Main* ſhould have let us into thoſe Secrets, even if ſuffered to go on, as for ſome Years they have done, ſo on the other Hand it was far enough from that Penetration, for which ſome of your Miniſters have been famous, to believe ſuch an Edict could keep them from our Knowledge altogether. As it is, you have them repreſented to you clearly and fairly, ſo as to be a Judge yourſelf of their Conſequences, and of the Importance of refuting them if that be in your Power. But permit me to add, before I cloſe this Diſpatch, that I think I have fully juſtified my Sentiments on this Subject, and proved that the Edict of the Parliament of *Paris*, is in Regard to Foreign Countries altogether ſuperfluous and uſeleſs, though as the Edict itſelf well obſerves, it may ſtop the fatal Effects of an improper Knowledge in the *Gallick* Provinces. But miſerable ſure muſt the Conduct of that Miniſtry be, which muſt have Recourſe to Baniſhment and the Gallies to hide that Conduct from the Eyes of their Fellow-Subjects, and who owe their own Safety to nothing, but the Ignorance of Prince and People.

I am,

With Submiſſion and Reſpect,

Yours, &c.

FINIS.

the Dutch already. Give me leave, however, to conclude, that though it is highly unlikely any of your Petits-Maitres should have let us into their Secrets, even if suffered to go on, as for some Years they have done, so on the other Hand it was far enough from that Penetration, for which some of your Miniſters have been famous, to believe ſuch an Edict could keep them from our Knowledge altogether. As it is, you have them repreſented to you clearly and fairly, ſo as to be a Judge yourſelf of their Conſequences, and of the Importance of retiring them if that be in your Power. But permit me to add, before I cloſe this Diſpatch, that I think I have fully juſtified my Sentiments on this Subject, and proved that the Edict of the Parliament of *Paris*, is in Regard to Foreign Countries altogether ſuperfluous and uſeleſs, though as the Edict itſelf well obſerves, it may ſtop the fatal Effects of an improper Knowledge in the *Gallic* [illegible]nces. But miſerable ſure muſt the Conduct of that Mini[illegible] which muſt have Recourſe to Baniſhment and the Ca[illegible] that Conduct from the Eyes of their Fellow-Subjects, and [illegible] their own Safety to nothing, but the Ignorance of Prince and People.

I am,

With Submiſſion and Reſpect,

Yours, &c.

FINIS.